

For Immediate Release
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Contact: Slade Franklin (307) 777-6585

Weed and Pest News:

National Invasive Weed Awareness Week VI – Washington D.C.

Wyoming, the least populated state in the United States, had the most representatives in attendance last week for National Invasive Weed Awareness Week (NIWAW) in Washington D.C.

Twelve Invasive Weed Warriors representing five counties and a handful of organizations, including the North American Weed Management Association (NAWMA) and Wyoming Weed and Pest Council, attended the event. Slade Franklin, Wyoming Weed and Pest Coordinator from Cheyenne; Bob Parsons, Josh Shorb, Walt Hartung, Neil Earhart, and Ben Johnson from Park County; Adrienne Peterson and Doug Vickrey from Sublette County, Dick and Susan Sackett from Crook County; Alan Pomeroy from Big Horn County; and Erika Wells from Teton County made the trek across the Country.

During NIWAW VI about 150 landowners and land managers; county and state officials; university researchers and extension specialists; association officers and volunteers; representatives from industry and environmental groups; and others met with members of Congress. Representatives from 29 states worked to strengthen invasive species legislation by meeting with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Department of Interior, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Non-Government Organizations.

"We are really beginning to see progress with invasive species issues at the National level," states Bob Parsons, Supervisor for Park County Weed and Pest and Vice-President of NAWMA. One example of this success is the recent passing of the Noxious Weed Control and Eradication Act of 2004.

Each year, participants agree on 3-4 common legislative goals that will be addressed during meetings with State Legislators. During meetings last week, NIWAW participants advocated for full funding/appropriations for the Noxious Weed Control and Eradication Act of 2004 (P.L. 108-412) at \$15 million for FY2006, amending this law to increase its authorized funding to the original level of \$100 million per year for each of four subsequent fiscal years, and for reintroducing and rapidly acting on the National Aquatic Invasive Species Act (H.R. 1080, 1081 and S.525 in the 108th Congress).

For more information on invasive species, the public can pick up a copy of the March issue of National Geographic Magazine, look for a series titled "Strange Days on Planet Earth" set to air on PBS in April, or contact their local Weed and Pest District.